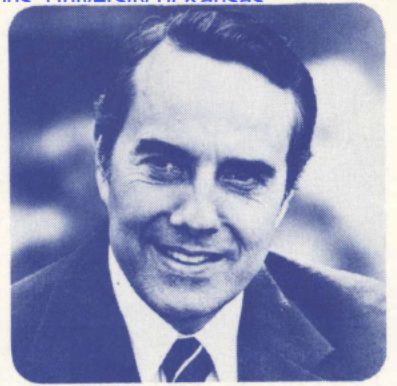


News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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ALTERNATIVES TO PRESENT LONG-TERM CARE FOR ELDERLY NEEDED

Following is the statement of Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) on S. 2809, long-term health care for the elderly:

I would like to begin by complimenting Senator Packwood for his long and thoughtful work on the proposal that is the subject of today's hearing.

The issue of a long-term-care policy for this Nation is also of great concern to the Senator from Kansas. For too long we have focused all of our efforts on reform of the existing institutional programs. These efforts have been successful and should certainly not be ignored. But the time has come to reevaluate this narrow focus.

Home Health Care: Problems and Potential

The hope of staying at home is being offered to our elderly citizens by increasing numbers of people, both politicians and providers. We hold out this hope to save costs, and to provide dignity and independence in caring for our citizens. But the current confusion of programs, and lack of a clear strategy which encourages noninstitutional care have resulted in our failure to truly utilize and develop innovative home based programs. Our fear of inappropriate utilization and massive new spending have also served to discourage action by the Congress.

During the past decade, experts in the field of aging and long-term care have stressed the importance of providing alternatives to needless institutionalization. The many hearings held and reports prepared by the Special Committee on Aging documented the need for this country's public policy to establish the adequate financing and delivery of home health

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services. During the authorization and expansion of the Older Americans Act, it was pointed out by elderly persons from all parts of the United States that access to adequate, affordable medical and home services was essential to preserving the dignity and independence of many senior citizens.

The Senator from Kansas believes these issues warrant our serious attention in the months to come, and welcomes the opportunity to work with his colleagues on the Senate Finance Committee and in the Senate as a whole.

Questions to be Resolved

The creation of a new title in the Social Security Act is a serious step, as is the entitlement for services of all individuals over age 65.

Clearly we must move carefully but surely in our effort to design a responsible and equitable program to help the elderly and disabled citizens across the country.

A First Step

While we may not believe that this bill answers all our questions, or resolves all the issues, it is nevertheless a significant first step.

I am looking forward to this first hearing, and the comments of the experts who have joined us today.

I believe it will take all of us working together to resolve the issues before us.